

Needles at 5 paces

Quilter collars designer who cut up treasured art

Illinois quilter Virginia Piland took her needle and stabbed designer Ralph Lauren where it hurt — in the shirt.

The quilt which Piland made and named, "Til-for Tat," in response to Lauren who cut up valuable antique quilts to make his high-fashion designs, will be one of the many highlights of "World of Quilts" at Meadow Brook Hall, Sept. 8-25.

In her quilter's revenge, Piland made her two-color quilt from an aqua Ralph Lauren shirt and white feed sacks. Like quilters of old, Piland didn't waste a scrap of the Lauren material, even incorporating the collar, label and cuffs into her design.

Her most piercing stab comes in form of "World of Quilts" about Lauren written on the quilt, preserv-

ing not only her wit, but her ire toward the designer.

"Til for Tat," is the traditional name of the mirror-image pattern Piland used, so the quilt itself is a double entendre.

WRITTEN ALONG the four sides are, "It's til for tat, Ralph Lauren (label). Take that! And that and that, and that and that." "As you sew, so shall you rip, Ralph Lauren, don't rip up any more antique quilts." "Quilters are sew super, but Ralph Lauren, you are an old sew-and-sew." "Sew long, Ralph Lauren. It's been good to no-no you."

There are other messages in the quilt, but the one on the tie in the center says it all, "You have been found 'quilt-y.' You're sentenced to a stretch on a quilting frame."

Mary Silber of Birmingham, quilt show coordinator, said that in addition to its unusual message, Piland's quilt is "beautifully made" and several others of hers are also in the show.

Silber said that because of the number in the show, close to 200, it will be difficult for visitors to enjoy the total scope of the exhibit. So, she and textile restorer, Lulu Cameron and those working with them, have arranged the exhibit into themes — message quilts and patriotic quilts, for instance.

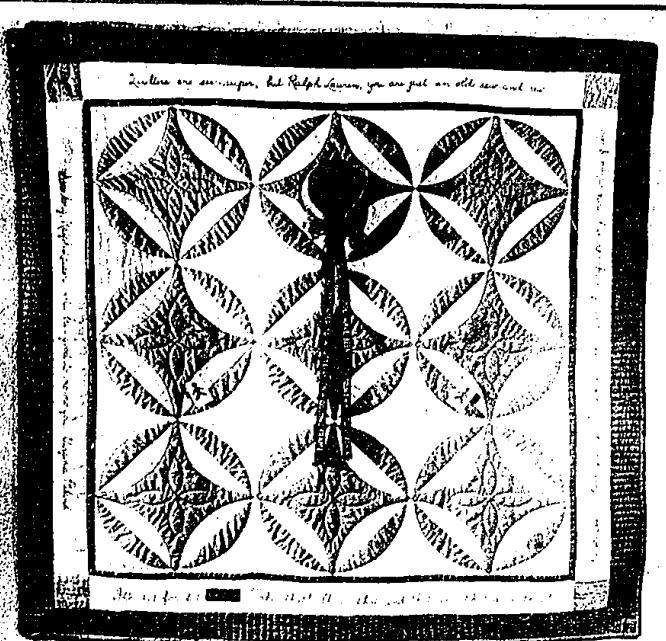
Because Meadow Brook Hall qualifies as a museum, Marilyn Brooks, special projects chairwoman, was able to borrow outstanding quilts from all over the world as well as from fine American collections, both public and private.

ALL OF the doll and crib quilts

In the tradition of quilting, Virginia Piland didn't waste a scrap of the Ralph Lauren shirt which she cut up to make her protest quilt. Even the collar served a purpose.



Staff photos by David Frank



Illinois quilter, Virginia Piland, admitted she used all of her extensive needle skills to take a number of stabs at fashion designer Ralph Lauren for

cutting up antique quilts to make clothing. That's as close to heresy as you can get in the world of serious quilters.

will be displayed in Knole cottage, the mini-mansion playhouse given to Frances Dodge for her 12th birthday.

Silber said of the organizing of this show which has been in the works for more than a year, "This the biggest team effort I've ever

been involved with."

The show will be open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Your reservations are necessary and much of the time is already booked solid. For brochures and information, call Meadow Brook Hall, Oakland University, Rochester, 377-3140.

A fully illustrated, 60-page color catalog will be available Sept. 1. It is available for \$11, postpaid, through Sept. 25; \$14 after that by writing to the publisher, Mrs. Mark Johnson, 1735 Villa, Birmingham, 48088. Make checks payable to Mrs. Johnson.

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creative living

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(F)E

Pros help budding writers polish their skills

By Victoria Diaz
special writer

Between bites of a hamburger and an order of fries, Gregg Heinrichs of Farmington Hills smiled and said, "This is marvelous."

The 19-year-old Oakland University freshman wasn't referring to the food, but to the 20th annual Cranbrook Writers' Conference, which he was attending.

Held earlier this month at Kingswood School Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills, the event was attended by 49 Michigan college students. Each had won a scholarship to the conference after submitting samples of writing to a panel of judges earlier this year.

Approximately 125 students throughout Michigan competed for the chance to attend the conference, according to John Rosen, associate professor of English at Oakland University and conference director.

The main goal of the yearly event is to give promising Michigan writers the opportunity to meet with professionals and to learn about their craft.

SPONSORED by the Cranbrook Writers' Guild, a non-profit group, costs of the program average \$500 per student, according to Rosen.

The conference isn't directly affiliated with Cranbrook. "We use the name and rent the house," Rosen said. All students boarded on campus during the four-day session.

On hand to advise students in workshop and individual sessions this year were poet William Stafford, fiction writer Alice McDermott, and former "Redbook" fiction editor, Jacqueline Johnson.

"I'm a veteran of writers' workshops, as may be apparent from the gray hair," said Stafford, 69, who won the National Book Award in 1963 for his collection of poems, "Traveling Through the Dark." "And they really do work. I feel utterly confident they work. The people here already know a lot, and we've got a lot of momentum."

Rigorous daily schedules consisted of poetry, fiction and feature-writing workshops in which each participant had his or her submitted work discussed and critiqued, plus lectures and individual consultations.

In the evenings, readings and informal discussions were conducted by Stafford, McDermott and Johnson. After the scheduled events, students often met on their own to read poetry or to share writing experiences.

"FOR ME, the most important thing about conferences like this is that writers get together," said McDermott, whose first novel, "A Bigamist's Daughter," was published last year.

"And I don't just mean new writers being with professional or older writers. I mean new writers being with new writers, sharing their interests, their fears, their problems, their efforts. Support is what it really comes down to."

"I think the guest writers who are here are almost unnecessary. I'm glad to be here, and I can provide certain information from my own experience. But, again, the most important thing is the participants getting together. Writing is a very lonely thing to do."

Johnson said of the students, "This may be their only real contact with other writers. This may be their only chance to compare experiences. That can be very helpful because, when you're sitting there at home by yourself, you can't always judge what certain things mean if you have no one to compare things with. Here, you can get advice, tips, support from other people."

Southfield resident Fedora Horowitz agreed. "It's good when there is constructive criticism," she said. "It helps you grow. It helps you to look at your



Fedora Horowitz of Southfield (left) and Lynn Drury listen as Jacqueline Johnson (right), former Redbook magazine editor, talks about her

work. It was this kind of informal conversation which the conference attendees found valuable.

work through others' eyes, and it helps you to make it better."

HOROWITZ, a concert pianist and student at Wayne State University, is writing a novel and was attending the conference for the third consecutive year.

"The writing is something I do on the side for my own, instead of going and paying 60 bucks to a psychiatrist," she said. "It's good therapy, I think."

Kathy Funk of Birmingham said her main reason for attending was to be with other writers. Another Wayne State student, Funk began writing seriously only last January, although she admits to a near-lifelong dream of being a writer. A former French and English teacher, Funk said she is in the process of "starting a new direction" in her life and wants to learn how she can "do some different things" with writing.

"I need something that's going to sustain me," she said. "I've been telling my children that they need to go out

there and give their all and do their best. Now, they're very directed, very independent. And I'm thinking, 'Okay, now it's my turn.'"

"So, I'm sort of picking up on some lost dreams here, and I'm just going to see where it'll take me," Funk added.

WASHTENAW Community College student Anne Hutchinson of Livonia saw the conference mainly as an opportunity to gain insight into improving her writing. A poet, Hutchinson said she found the participants almost totally non-competitive with each other.

"In the workshops, even if negative things were said about your work, they were said in a very supportive way," she said. "There was a really good, cooperative spirit. The conference enabled me to look very closely at my own writing and to gain a new perception of it."

University of Michigan senior Deborah Montwori of Westland said she had come to the conference in order to

Staff photos by Deborah Booker

concentrate solely on poetry.

"I wanted to meet people who are involved in the same thing, take part in some really good poetry discussions, get some exposure to different styles, and gain some new insights into publishing," she said. "I feel really inspired now. And I'm already planning on trying to get back here next year. I'll be really disappointed if I don't make it."

Finally, one persistent complaint about the conference was best expressed by 20-year-old Anne Stander, an Oakland University student from Birmingham.

"I just wish it could last a lot longer," she said. "And I wish we could have it at least three times a year."



Poet William Stafford has both a dry sense of humor and a special kind of tenderness which show up frequently in his work. His feelings about conservation are also included in his writing.